

# TOC H JOURNAL



OCTOBER  
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Lord Halifax Says:

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From a letter to The Times, September 26, 1939.

# TOC H JOURNAL

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## THE LARGE ISSUE

What are we fighting?

WHAT is the foe we now fight? The reasons which have brought our nation, alongside France and the nations of the British Commonwealth, into a deadly struggle which not one of us desired, are well known to every soul amongst us. They are not reasons of mere economic self-interest, as some cynics may maintain. They are not based on a desire for conquest or self-aggrandisement—no fool can uphold that view. They are not due to a lust for the "annihilation" of another nation, as that nation's propaganda tries to suggest. They are not mainly based on the motive of self-preservation, always one of the strongest among individuals or nations and therefore certainly operating in the present case. Motives are always mixed and, as the war goes on, will become more so (we remember the tragic difference in spirit between 1914 and 1919), but one motive stands now above all the rest. The simplest statement of our task still comes to us in the voice of Abraham Lincoln, scarcely heard at the time he spoke, but now assured of immortality. "It is rather," he said, "for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us . . . that this nation, under God, shall have a new-birth of Freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

We have grown accustomed for many years—even before Adolf Hitler's advent to power in 1933—to living in a world of 'power politics.' We have long grown sick of its grossly unmoral philosophy, shouted at us from Rome, Berlin, Nuremberg or Danzig; we have grown angry over its wilful distortions of truth, laughed at its flights of exaggeration, yawned over the pictures of its flags and marching men. And now, after many warnings, hesitations and delays, we find ourselves face to face with it, pledging all we have and are on its destruction. Our easy-tempered nation, which has long viewed the battle from afar, has tried to believe that it would never be involved in another 'Continental' quarrel at first-hand. But now the incredible has happened, and we have no doubts any more as to our duty in this regard.

We know plainly what we are opposing—an idea of dominating other peoples, an old doctrine that "the end justifies the means," a system of brute force and bad faith, to which we have given the nickname of one greatly misguided man—"Hitlerism." This is no new enemy. Last time we fought it we called it "Prussianism," with better reason. For the home of the idea, which its prophets have elevated into a national religion, is one province, the most powerful and the least 'Nordic' of Germany. For two hundred years—save one (Frederick the Great began his reign of "blood and iron" in 1740) the "power politics" of Prussia have not changed in aim or method. The proof is in the history books and in the memory of many now living.

"Not against flesh and blood"

What we are fighting, then, is an idea, a principle which controls the lives, whether willing or unwilling, of eighty million people, and is now being forced upon many millions more beyond the frontiers of German race and language. Ideas, whether good or bad, are the most powerful force in the world, so intangible at first, so penetrating as they proceed, so

overwhelming in their final conquests. How difficult a foe ideas are St. Paul knew, as he sat in the midst of a world scarcely more pagan than ours, finishing a letter to his friends in Ephesus. This is what he wrote on the last page: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood"—and yet it is in flesh and blood that the idea is enshrined and in which it must be met and combated. We cannot strike at the false foe of the "power politics" idea except through the bodies, as well as the minds, of those who are enslaved by it and must now do its final bidding in war. The agony of men's bodies is certain, it has already begun on the grand scale. The agony of their minds continues and must increase—the anxiety of women, the fears of children, the disillusionment of millions whose hopes prove false and beliefs hollow. And in striking at the idea we must also suffer agonies of body and mind.

### Contradictions

Not one of us believes that the "Prussian" principle ought to guide and control the lives of men and nations; not one of us doubts that it must be opposed always, especially here and now. We shall not all agree as to the means by which we should oppose it, but the great majority of us are now certain that force of this kind and at this stage must be opposed by force. And there lies for us one of the greatest difficulties and dangers. It is so easy in fighting "Prussianism" not merely to use "Prussian" weapons but actually to acquire the "Prussian" mind, to answer hate with hate and lie with lie.

And yet this need not be. Our nation goes now into the struggle with a pretty clear view of its own ideal of Freedom, and with a fixed determination to safeguard it for ourselves and to win it for others. It goes in quietly and pretty grimly, but—in its incorrigible way—with its good temper unruffled and its queer sense of humour always alive at incongruous points. That is so much like the 1914 mood, though we are more sober, by experience, in 1939, and perhaps more foreseeing of the cost. This mood can easily change as the horrible business goes on—as we saw the mood change and the ideal become clouded when the last war had "lasted too long."

War is full of the most glaring contradictions. Good triumphs alongside evil; they even take possession of the same person in bewildering mixture. In war (the supreme negation of fellowship) fellowship shines out, a light in black darkness, as at no other time. In the midst of inconceivable noise and suffering there are men (some of us counted our friends among them) who preserve unshaken, living or dying, the secret of the Quiet Mind. It will seem a complete anomaly to many pacifists, but is in fact familiar to many an experienced soldier, that it is possible, and indeed, not rare,

"To honour, while you strike him down,  
The foe that comes with fearless eyes."

Under the common strain a new spirit of neighbourliness comes out, as usual, in many directions, and in the face of danger there is a good deal of that "loyalty of mind" which an English commander five hundred years ago noted as the characteristic of his men. These qualities are not 'put on'; they are good things generally found among us in bad times. As a subaltern, killed in Flanders in 1917, wrote home: "The power of being cheerful is worth much fine gold, and it helps others on no end. Without it no man can attain to leadership, whether in thought or deed. . . . Wherefore, O my brother, be happy, for it is your job."

This is the chaotic, nightmare world into which we are now to be swept once again, after more than twenty years of uneasy and dishonourable Armistice. There is much for every one of us to do, but most of all an idea, or set of ideas, to be upheld under all temptations and adversities that may assail us.

## THE PART OF TOC H

### Toc H makes its choice

On September 3, when the Prime Minister broadcast the news which in our hearts we already knew—that we were at war, two choices were already facing our Toc H family. We could close down, try to sit on our assets, lock up our overdraft in the bank, and wait for a peace-time to return in which the whole business of 'pre-war' Toc H could attempt to get going again. Or we could receive the news as an immediate call to us, as to the whole nation, for action; we could mobilise with the least possible delay all our resources—a good many men, a fair amount of experience, and rather little money—for a great new opportunity of fellowship and service. If we had taken the first course Toc H would soon be deservedly dead. We have all chosen the second.

The 'switch-over' from Toc H organised for peace-time to Toc H mobilised for war could not be made in the twinkling of an eye—any more than Talbot House in Flanders could have been reborn without travail as Toc H Incorporated. And it is certain that many a member, bursting to get going on the new tasks, has waited with impatience for a lead from the centre which seemed to him slow in coming.

Actually the powers that be at the centre and in the Areas were not idle. They were reckoning their forces, looking for the right openings, busily collecting news of the spontaneous efforts which members and units all over the place were making. Most members were already sure that Toc H had no thoughts of 'packing up'; the main object of this improvised first number of the war-time JOURNAL is to make all of them doubly certain. It was necessary to let the general public know this too, and on September 26 a most authoritative voice spoke in a letter to *The Times*. This is what the Foreign Secretary, in the midst of the most momentous responsibilities that could fall on any man, felt justified in writing:—

SIR,—As one of the Presidents of Toc H I want to call attention to its particular functions in the present emergency. An old play upon the letters of its name produced for Toc H the motto "To conquer hate," and it is perhaps the foremost task of all Toc H members to foster this spirit now. If our nation can prosecute and finish the work we are in without hatred it will have helped incalculably towards a victory of Christian principle, the only sure basis of eventual peace.

The first object of Toc H, as defined by Royal Charter, is "to preserve amongst men and to transmit to future generations the traditions of fellowship and service manifested by all ranks" during the last war, in which the movement found its origin. This object has been actively pursued by its members all over the world during the past twenty years in a great variety of ways which are familiar to the public. The spirit of this work does not change, but its methods are now being adapted to war conditions.

Toc H is, of course, making its full contribution of men both to the fighting Services and to all forms of civil defence. These men will find supreme opportunities for preserving and transmitting "traditions of fellowship and service." Besides direct national service of this kind, Toc H is discovering and using a great many opportunities to serve the men of the Navy, Army and Air Force, the civil defence workers, the evacuated population, and indeed anyone in need of friendship. Its twenty-five residential houses and numerous local meeting places in this country and overseas are providing premises for such work day and night, and its available membership is being mobilized to carry it on.

I regard the varied work which Toc H has been doing since the last war as the best possible training for what it is now undertaking, and the simple methods it has evolved during those years as a great asset now. I am confident that it will not fail to make its full contribution, in spirit and in action, in the time of our need.—Yours faithfully,

47, Francis Street, S.W.1.

HALIFAX.

Toc H is thus committed to a job the scope and risk of which no one can yet foresee. We have often talked a little glibly in the 'pre-war' days, just over, of "a sense of adventure" in Toc H. This *is* adventure, and it must not catch us sleeping or pass us by. Toc H in September, 1939, ought surely to compare itself with Talbot House in December, 1915. We are starting on a new job. One difference ought to be that we are more prepared than we were then, for we have had twenty years of what Lord Halifax calls "the best possible

training." That training in some cases became a stereotyped routine of Branch meetings and rather unimportant scraps of service, and most of us have met members in recent years who complained that Toc H seemed to have grown stale and to have lost its way. But all the time others were using their imagination and finding new openings and endless interest in their membership. Now the chance is given to us all to regain "the first fine careless rapture," the touch of Poperinghe, the pioneer spirit of the first generation which planted Toc H at home. Can we rise to this? If so, we shall understand why Rupert Brooke in 1914 burst out with—

Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,  
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,  
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpened power . . .

### "To conquer hate"

Toc H is, first and foremost, a spiritual society, in the sense that it claims to have been led, in any success it has had, by the Spirit of God, and that it exists to spread among men a certain spirit, which it believes to be Christian, in everyday life. And this war, like all wars, is a spiritual war, in the sense that men are opposing a spirit which they believe to be good against a spirit they believe to be evil. The tragedy, as usual, is that *each* side believes, or tries hard to persuade itself, that it is the champion of the right spirit. Both sides, as usual, will claim that God has blessed their cause and leads their armies. Most of us believe that there is good and evil on both sides, however much we are convinced that our main idea is right and our essential cause just. All thinking Christians, let us hope, believe that God still dwells, as always, in the hearts of His true servants, whichever side they are on in this war, and that He is no tribal Jehovah, commanding the attack or the defence of battle. But many notions, time-honoured but certainly sub-Christian, many little pagan rites, superstitions and mascots, which belong to the childish stage of man's mind, will rise to obscure true religion in this time of war. We must first be clear about these and stand firm against the temptations they offer. This will be one of the tests of Toc H as a true spiritual society.

One special task was set for the 'Toc H spirit' long ago, very soon after the last war ended, by whoever first made the play upon the letters of our name—"To Conquer Hate." We have tried in the intervening years to interpret this principle widely—to overcome, in the natural ways of ordinary living, the prejudices between men of different social classes, religious denominations, political opinions, colour and race. As Toc H has grown from a small body of survivors out of a common experience of war into a very mixed and highly organised family, the good Branch or Group (dare we quite say "the typical unit"?) has come to be a mirror of this principle. It is a fact often surprising to the stranger, that the same room week by week can hold a "human Zoo," the strangest and mostly delightful mixture of men who not only work together in brotherly love but—what is far harder—actually like each other.

And now the highest test of all has come, without our seeking. Can we fight against men, possibly for year after year, without hating them? Can we not only do this ourselves, in fulfilment of our pledges of membership in Toc H, but patiently help other men to do the same? Can we come anywhere near fulfilling the law of Christ and "love our enemies"? That is indeed the way of the Cross. No harder task can ever face the 'Toc H spirit.'

The opening phase of this war has been astonishing in many ways. The political and military moves have brought almost daily surprises, but not the least remarkable feature is in the realm of the spirit. Let it never be forgotten that the British offensive on Germany opened with bombing from the air—not with steel and death, but with paper bearing what we believe to be the simple truth. Twenty million leaflets is the strangest load ever likely to be carried by invading 'planes into the enemy's country. This bold and curious feat was only



possible because it reflected the spirit of the nation which undertook it. There is, after a month of savage war, no hatred among us—except in odd corners, still negligible—of the German people. We still uphold tenaciously and clearly the distinction, denied again and again by Germany's official spokesmen, between the people of Germany and the group of leaders who, we believe, have led them so tragically astray. "Hitler is Germany, and Germany is Hitler" (Goering's phrase) simply doesn't ring true to us, we refuse to be moved by it.

For a good many of us this conviction is deeply personal and most poignant. We have met Germans we liked, we have talked to them without reserve on either side, we have enjoyed the hospitality and friendliness of their country and found none more warm-hearted in Europe. And some of us go further. We have very dear, perhaps life-long, friends in Germany. And now, separated from them and anxious for their welfare, we are quite certain that their hearts will not change. In these cases—and they are not rare among us—there is no need whatsoever to urge us "to conquer hate," for it cannot enter in.

Can this mood, as between our nation and theirs, outlive any long period of war? Germanophobia, in the crude forms we used to know, has reared its ugly head here and there—but astonishingly seldom—in the popular English press already. Vindictiveness grows quickly, especially among those furthest from the fighting line, and will grow when the suffering of the war begins to be direct and heavy upon us. Can Toc H members, even those called to strike ruthlessly at the enemy in the field, still continue to the end "to conquer hate"? That, in a phrase grown familiar among us, "would be to end the strife of all the ages." It would be for Christian men and good soldiers the greatest victory of all.

### Trying to foresee Peace

Next, Toc H members have a duty to use their minds, for we were told long ago by Peter Monie that Toc H "is not a society of fractions of people, of abstractions from people, but of whole men"—body, mind and spirit. The war, while it lasts, will keep us busy and demand the last ounce from many of us, but it will not last for ever. And then what? Shall there be peace on the earth, or just another patchwork like the 'settlement' of 1919, which held, as many wise men knew at the time, the seeds of all the wars that have happened since, including the 'Great War' of 1939? A very old friend of Toc H writes—

As the war goes on I can well imagine that Toc H will be needed in all sorts of new ways: if the last war was its birth, this war may well be its rebirth—and for some time I have felt that it would do it no harm to be born again. Constructive work like that seems to me of vital importance, and I hope we shall all come to realise that to think out *now* a positive peace policy and to build up in our minds the world that is to be, is as important a piece of national service as working for the victory on which, of course, it will depend. I hope we have learned the fatuousness of talking hot air about a "peace based on justice," etc. We must come down to brass tacks and say what we mean, in terms of human beings organised in their communities, by these phrases.

This is a vital subject, and we shall return to it often again.

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## We carry on

And now to practical work. Toc H has grown up in a simple, definite pattern of its own. During the past twenty years we have built up certain machinery to help, not hinder, the attainment of our aims. This, on the whole, has stood the test of time, and the moment of crisis is not the occasion for scrapping it but for using it as fully as conditions permit for the work in hand. The structure of our family, the system of team-work in Area, District and unit, is real and will still serve.

The non-essentials—so long as we don't "pour away the baby with the bath-water"—can safely be shed. For instance, don't get worried about 'Branch status.' The whole process of promotion and the distinction, often unreal, between a Branch and a Group was under discussion, by order of the Central Council, when the war broke out, and plans for drastic simplification were already in the wind. There is no need now to consider them—the war will simplify many cumbrous and unreal things in our lives. So, if a few of you have a Lamp or a Rushlight, use it now with new emphasis and meaning when you can get together. We are all called to be good Toc H members now, and the label of our particular type of membership is lost. Moreover, the family of Toc H will contain, as it did in Poperinghe and in the first days at home, all who are with us, whether they hold membership cards or not. Anything less than that would be much less than what the fellowship of Toc H stands for.

This is not to say that Toc H as an organised and disciplined body now comes to an end. Disbandment would destroy our fighting power when it is most needed. Subscriptions will be paid—we can't work without them—and many new ones, we hope, will reinforce them. Let us also recognise that in many parts of the country units are functioning almost normally and that this may go on for some time yet or all the time. In such places a few younger men have been called up, others are kept busy in the civil defence services, but the weekly meeting is being held and there is no lack of jobs, new and old. In other places the team has been scattered to various duties, and its meeting place in a number of cases taken over by one of the Services, military or civil. We must just get together as we can, whether in our old units or in new ones, which may be temporary or permanent. In any case the family remains, and increases, not diminishes.

A word about the alignment of our forces. The boundaries of the twenty-five old Areas of Toc H have ceased to be water-tight, but we are fitting ourselves into a new regional plan. The Government has divided the country into twelve Civil Defence Regions, varying in size from two counties to seven, Scotland and Wales being two Regions of their own. In each of these twelve Regions the National Council of Social Service has appointed an officer to maintain contact with all the voluntary organisations at work, and in each Toc H has at present a staff man, suitably placed and assisted by others in the Region where needed, as its *liaison* officer with the N.C.S.S. These 'Area Correspondents' of ours keep in close touch, of course, with Headquarters. In addition, Headquarters of Toc H and the Y.M.C.A., which

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had most friendly exchanges of plans in the crisis of September, 1938, are now keeping close touch through the local representatives of Toc H in the twelve Divisions into which the Y.M.C.A. throughout the country is divided. In these ways we are trying to enter the immense field of war work, both among the Services and civilians, where we are wanted and without overlapping with others. There is plenty of room for us all!

### Work for the Services

Beside and beyond what may be called the normal peace-time activities of Toc H, there is now springing up in all directions work connected with the war, which may soon be counted more 'normal' than any other. It falls into three categories—work for the three fighting Services, for the Civil Defence Services and for 'civilians.' A centre of work may cater for any one or two or three of these at any given time: there is great need and infinite variety. News of progress and of fresh efforts reaches Headquarters every day.

Let us touch first on what we are trying to do for the three Services, the Navy, Army and Air Force. It must needs be a very light touch, for everyone realises the necessity for extreme reticence about proper names in the interests of national safety and to "keep the enemy guessing." The pattern of Talbot House, Poperinghe, springs, of course, to mind at once, and we shall probably find it best to concentrate our main effort on a small number of 'Talbot Houses,' each with its man at the centre, and, therefore, its own character. For the Royal Navy one such place, a hut where houses are not available, has been started 'somewhere northwards' by Tubby. Peter le Mesurier is at present with him and first-hand news reached us recently when Tubby paid a short visit to London. Overseas, Dicky Dines has left Talbot House, Malta, for the time to visit "Claridge's Club," his first love, in another part of the Mediterranean. At home ports various ventures are stirring of which we cannot yet give details.

About the Army and the Air Force even less precise information can be given. Most of the Marks are open, some of them day and night, to soldiers and airmen, as well as other visitors. The rooms of a great many units are welcoming men in uniform night after night. Some new places are already open, notably a house at Southampton (where the Mark has been taken over for hospital purposes). It is too early to speak of work across the Channel or on any other war-front; time will show where opportunity lies.

Some of this work will be temporary, though all of it is worth doing. The concentrations of troops may shift and pass on and we shall open and close, serving them where we can. We should expect some of it to be "for duration," the true descendant of the Old House, a home for homeless men, the focus of a family spirit which will endure long after war is over.

Behind the fighting men stands Civil Defence, and with these services we are very busy. Not only are many members engaged as Air Raid Wardens, Auxiliary Firemen, Special Constables, War Reserve Police, Stretcher-bearers and so on, but some of the Marks and the premises of units are used as posts of A.R.P. or A.F.S., and a great many are doing all they can for the men off duty. Side by side with them are the Anti-Aircraft gunners and the Barrage Balloon men. All these defenders of our homes are suffering from one of the commonest curses of war, which has been defined as "months of boredom, punctuated by moments of terror." They are just waiting—the boredom is real, the terror still deferred—and nothing saps the spirit of keenness and good humour more. Friendship is the best tonic for both.

### Work for Civilians

The peace-time jobs of friendship done in the ordinary course by Toc H cannot be put away. The blind are not less blind, the sick and lonely less so, because there is a war on;

often their need is now all the greater. Work among boys does not stop when the older among them have gone. It is never so urgently wanted as in war time, as the last occasion taught us, when fathers are away serving, mothers anxious and upset, and many of the boys themselves are overworked and earning much bigger money than they are used to handling. A lot that will happen in the future depends on the friendship and the leadership we can offer to these boys now. We daren't let the clubs and scout troupes and companies go by the board, now of all times.

Added to these claims there are new ones on an immense, a national, scale. The 'evacuees' (hideous word!), official and unofficial, run into millions and may increase. Whole families are rooted up or, still worse, divided. The townsfolk, mainly women and children, have been dumped in an almost completely foreign land—the countryside, with the winter coming on. The move from London or Newcastle to a village in Dorset or Wales might almost as well be to Australia, and the problems it raises are as complicated as the overseas emigrant's, but on a larger scale. This re-shuffle, perhaps re-settlement, of population in our own country is likely to prove one of the major revolutions in a war which will change the face of so many things. And here again Toc H must lend a hand. It has begun already to do so. There may be much to be said before long of new ventures such as those at Tunbridge Wells or Bedford, already under weigh.

The 'home front' is not a jot less important than the fighting front, which indeed depends upon it vitally in both the material and the spiritual sense. Talbot House in the last war dealt with soldiers; Toc H in this war cannot escape dealing alike with sailors, soldiers, airmen *and* civilians. We are constantly told (and already in China, Spain and Poland we have seen) that civilians in modern war are in the line of fire. It is also certainly true that the men of our new fighting forces are, more than ever before, civilians wearing uniform for a short time in their lives. The fellowship and the service of Toc H cannot now set up artificial barriers between citizens, based upon the clothes they wear and the type of national duty they are doing. Such barriers spring up all too easily: it is for the family spirit to keep them down. And when the R.A.F. members in one overcrowded town volunteered to send in half-a-dozen airmen every night to run a club for 'evacuees,' we have a right to be pleased and none to be surprised.

## Finance

Work needs money. Toc H has more work now, and most of its members less money, than ever before. Here is a big challenge to a big effort. The job of keeping Toc H not merely afloat but moving forward will be very tough, but it is not insuperable.

We must expect the family income to fall severely at first. The war budget, announced last week, hits all of us, however we may grin and bear it. Subscriptions will be as erratic as men's movements have become, donations from some old friends will fail, a number of Builders may drop out. The Marks, rapidly losing their hostellers in some cases, must find other means of carrying-on—for they are needed. Draastic economies have been made already, others may be called for. But the work must go on.

There are two ways in which the essential revenue can be found. The first rests with ourselves. Every member who can possibly pay a subscription must do so *punctually*. We need to do more—to build up a 'fighting fund.' Here are two suggestions. Let every one of us who can, send to Headquarters (i.e., to The Registrar, Toc H Mark XVI, High Street, Swindon) *one shilling per month* average (it may be less in some cases, a lot more in others). This may be done in any form or currency (we know what French paper-money looks like in war-time!). It may arrive in an envelope from an individual or (more conveniently for the accountant) be collected and remitted by a local treasurer. But let it be regular and to be

relied upon: "little and often" will do the trick, as anyone with a taste for figures can reckon out. Then there are other sources of supply among ourselves. What about that 'nest-egg' of a few pounds, held by the Branch or Group, for a contingency some day? Here is *the* contingency: send it now to Headquarters. Other methods will occur to the ingenious who believe in the cause. Toc H not only needs more money, but can actually produce more money than any of us can calculate.

The second way we can find revenue is from outside. Where Toc H can justify itself by the work actually done there should not be any reasonable doubt about local interest being able and ready to help financially. Do not be dismayed by the old paradox that in order to do work you need money and that in order to get money you need to do work. We must risk a good deal to do the work, in the faith that the money will follow. This is a kind of recklessness familiar both to proper financiers and good Christians.

#### Last but not Least

Readers will probably be complaining that this first war-time number of the JOURNAL ought to be a newspaper and is little more than a sermon. The news is all in the making and by next month will probably be easier to sort and, subject to censorship, to give in some perspective. This final counsel may we offer to all members into whose hands this comes. Take out your *Toc H Diary* and read some pages again—the 'Objects' in the Charter, the 'Four Points of the Compass,' 'The Main Resolution,' the Toc H Prayer. Do not their phrases ring truer than ever, more challenging and compelling? "To preserve amongst men and to transmit to future generations the traditions of fellowship and service . . ."; "to check all bitterness, to disown discouragement, to practise thanksgiving and to leap with joy to any task for others"; "to challenge our generation to seek the Will of Christ in the solution of all problems"; "to think fairly, the love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely"; "to bring home to multitudes of men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities." These old phrases, born of profound conviction, leap to fresh life in war-time, truth made doubly true. So long as our members follow these old aims, now made new, Toc H lives and will do, as best it can, the Will of God.

BARCLAY BARON.

### SOME NOTES ABOUT OURSELVES

#### The Toc H Journal

A word, first of all, about this JOURNAL. One of the earliest decisions taken at Headquarters when the outbreak of war began to threaten was that the Toc H JOURNAL would be needed and must go on. It must give us news of each other when we are deprived of "the fellowship of sight and hand." It must bear to its readers a touch of the 'Toc H spirit' which we now need, which the whole world needs, more than we have ever done.

We decided, therefore, not only to continue publication to our normal JOURNAL subscribers, but to get it into the hands of every member, Builder and friend whom we could reach. The edition this month is greatly increased. But, like most of the institutions round us in the first weeks of the war, the JOURNAL takes on a new guise. The reasons for this are compelling and, we hope, easy to understand. Economy of time, labour, postage and paper have to go hand in hand with an expanding circulation. So our readers get twelve pages instead of forty-eight. As it is, the small staff at Swindon will have their work cut out to do the increased distribution. And the still smaller staff in London (the part-time editor

is a full-time A.R.P. Warden, his assistant is now a 'travelling secretary') has no leisure for the frills of journalism. So we do the best we can. The present number must *not* be taken as a final pattern for war-time. We hope to build up again from this modest fresh beginning. It is far better to have the chance of increasing rather than the risk of having to diminish.

*Meanwhile, will recipients of this issue, who have not already subscribed in advance, contribute what they can to this and the next number (the present price is 3d. a copy). They will help by giving us their war-time address and the names and addresses of any members or friends to whom the JOURNAL ought to be sent.*

A word to our 'pre-war' readers. A good many of them have paid an annual subscription at the rate of 5s. up to December, 1939, or even renewed it already for next year. They are not receiving in October what they paid for in January; they are entitled to say that they are not getting their money's worth. We ask them, simply and without apology, to consider that they are now doing Toc H a service which they had not foreseen. Much of this first war-time issue must be distri-

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buted free if it is to be as widespread as we want to make it.

Finally, a word to Toc H Builders, who have hitherto received the quarterly *Builders' News Sheet* of four pages. That publication is now discontinued and in its place they will receive this JOURNAL. In other words, they will have news of Toc H monthly instead of quarterly, and at least three times as much of it in each number. This step is fully justified, for at no time have we so much needed the co-operation of every friend of Toc H and his or her understanding of what we are trying to do.

#### Toc H Headquarters

Swindon and London have been mentioned. A few days before the outbreak of war, in common with Government offices, banks, hundreds of commercial houses and all kinds of societies, Toc H moved part of its staff and its most essential records out of London. This move, planned months before and made in orderly fashion, was to our own house, Mark XVI, High Street, Swindon, which is very well suited to the purpose. Thither the books of the Corporation, the records of membership, the irreplaceable archives and the necessary office equipment were transferred. The staff which went with them consists of Hubert Secretan (Hon. Administrator), W. J. Musters (Registrar), J. J. McLoughlin (his assistant), Jack Harrison (Accountant), Bill Davies (who keeps the Membership records), Bob Shelston and Miss Wilson (stenographers and secretaries). Paul Slessor and Mrs. Ferguson (of Tower Hill), both of whom are concerned in work for the Services, are at present with them, as are the wives of several of the married members.

In London there remain at 47, Francis Street, Arthur Edgar (Hon. Assistant Administrator), Rex Calkin (General Secretary), Herbert Leggate (Joint Administrative Padre), Dallas Ralph (Hon. Secretary for the Services) and Barclay Baron (part-time Editorial Secretary), with one typist, and Charlie and Mrs. Dearden keeping house.

So we have, as most concerns normally centred on London now have, what may be described in military terms (now again becoming fashionable) as a 'Base Headquarters' at Mark XVI and an 'Advanced Headquarters' at 47, Francis Street. The *liaison* (blessed word from the last war!) between the two, by personal touch and by correspondence, is of the closest. At Swindon there is the essential freedom from alarms and excursions in which the Hon. Administrator can plan and direct operations and in which the routine business of Toc H, at home and overseas, can be carried on. In London the skeleton but cheerful staff can deal promptly with emergency work, which grows constantly and keeps them busy.

#### The "Government" of Toc H

The Central Executive has met once already since war broke out. Its numbers were, of course, depleted, and khaki was not absent from the table. It was decided to hold fortnightly lunch-hour meetings in London of what amounts to a 'War Cabinet,' consisting of such members of the Central Executive as are available, together with representatives of the staffs at Swindon and

in London. Between such meetings, or in the event of it not being possible to hold them, authority was given to the Chairman, or, failing him, to either of the Treasurers, in consultation with the Hon. Administrator or Hon. Assistant Administrator, to exercise all the powers of the Executive, and to report such action to the war-time Executive at the first opportunity.

#### The Staff

Like every other body, including our own Branches and Groups, which has worked or played together in peace-time, we have suffered the sudden break-up of a team and known the sadness of farewell to trusted people and cherished plans. National duties and our own finances forbade it to be otherwise. The younger members of the staff who are fit for military service have, of course, been called up or are awaiting their call. A few of these while waiting continue to serve Toc H in emergency work. As for the rest, a number of men on the staff at Headquarters, in the office or in the Areas, have been discharged or are under notice to leave. All that can, or should, remain is the small nucleus necessary for central administration in Swindon and London, and the men specially suitable for war-time enterprises whom we can afford to keep at present 'in the field.' It is far too early to say how many this may eventually be.

The whole-time staff of Toc H, paid and honorary, which has worked so closely together at Headquarters and in the Areas during nearly twenty years, and which has met at its annual conference to the tune of about seventy men, is largely scattered, never as the same body to re-assemble. Similar fate has overtaken almost every firm and society, club and team in the country and we must not make too much of it. But a band of brothers so closely knit cannot part without hearts full of remembrance, thanksgiving and good wishes to one another.

#### L.W.H.

The Toc H League of Women Helpers has had to make similar changes. Headquarters has moved from London to the home of Mrs. King, Beech Farm House, Sedlescombe, near Battle, Sussex, where Helen Benbow, lately returned from New Zealand, is in charge as General Secretary. Miss Macfie (Founder Pilot) remains in London, at Crutched Friars on Tower Hill, the old Headquarters, which is now running as a sort of Talbot House for women working in the City. The work of the Areas is being carried on, as best it may, by five 'Staff Correspondents.'

A word should here be clearly said about the relations of Toc H and L.W.H. As every member knows, they are twin movements, with a common origin in the last war and with the same aims ever since, but under separate administration. Any constitutional issues between them may now be safely left in abeyance until '*après la guerre*.' What does seem to us to be of vital importance now is that for the purposes of war-time service the two bodies should stand, without qualification, side by side and work together or separately just as each opportunity demands. Toc H—both men and women—faces the war as one body.